



SAINT MARK

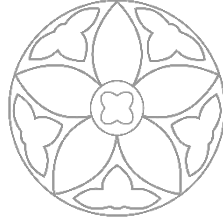
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

God's Grace Transforming Lives

Sunday, December 17, 2023
Eleven O'clock

Third Sunday of Advent
A Service of 7 Lessons and Carols





11 AM Morning Worship

**You are invited to stand as you are able in body and spirit.*

The Gathering

Words of Welcome and Grace

We welcome each of you to this service! No matter who you are or where you are from, you are a child of God, and you are welcome here!

Prelude

E'en So Lord Jesus

*The Call to Worship

One: In the presence of the Lord there is fulness of joy.

All: We come before the Lord.

One: The Spirit offers to all who come unspeakable joy.

All: We come in God's presence.

One: Here there are treasures for everyone.

All: We come in expectation.

Praise and Thanksgiving

*Hymn of Praise

UMH No. 196 | Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

*Prayer of Confession & Pardon

All: God of unquenchable light, through Jesus Christ, you shine in the darkness and dispel the shadows of our lives. You liberated us from what held us captive, and commanded us to liberate others through your light shining in us. Where we have failed, forgive us. Where we have dimmed our light, restore us. Where we have not allowed the light of Christ to shine through us, have mercy on us. Shine in us again, so we will be ablaze for you.

One: Hear the Good News: Christ, the Light of the world, shines upon you. Let your light shine before others, so they may see your good works and glorify God in heaven. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

*Gloria

Gloria in excelsis deo. Gloria in excelsis deo.

*The Passing of the Peace

One: The Peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you.

All: And also, with you.

Let us offer each other signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Choir: O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

One: We hurry along our way. There are not enough hours in the day it seems. There are decorations to put up, gifts to purchase, and recipes to plan and prepare. Is it that time already; where did the time go? We passed sad and weary people along the way, but did not share the good news with them. We are so busy with our own lives, we sometimes forget to share the joy of the Light with others.

All: The prophet Isaiah testifies, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my whole being shall be joyful because of my God." This is also a testimony for us today, a testimony we should share with all who we encounter, spreading the joy of the Light to all peoples.

One: We light this third candle as a sign of our joy. A joy that is not based on the traditions of the world, but grounded in the one who is the Joy of the world. We light this candle of joy as we anticipate the coming of the Lord.

Light the third candle on the wreath.

One: Fill us with your joy, Lord.

All (sung): Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Concerns and Celebrations of the Congregation

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Our Father (God), who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Proclamation of God's Word

Invitation to the Offertory & Offertory Prayer

Offertory

Ding Dong! Merrily On High

*The Gospel Lesson

John 1: 6-8; 19-28

One: The Gospel of Our Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon

Waiting for a Savior: Testify to the Light



THE MCDOWELL FINE ARTS CENTER
AT SAINT MARK

presents

A Service of Seven Lessons and Carols

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023
11:00 a.m.

SAINT MARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

781 peachtree street, ne | atlanta, georgia 30308
stmarkumc.org | 404.873.2636

The First Lesson
Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

Carol
People Look East

*People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.*

*Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
love, the rose, is on the way.*

*Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.*

*Angels, announce to man and beast
him who cometh from the east.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.*

The Second Lesson
Genesis 22:15-18

Carol

Of the Father's Love Begotten

*Of the Father's love begotten,
ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see
evermore and evermore!*

*O that birth forever blessed,
when a virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Savior of our race;
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed His sacred face,
evermore and evermore!*

*This is he whom seers in old time
chanted of with one accord,
whom the voices of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long-expected;
let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore!*

*Let the heights of heav'n, adore Him;
angel hosts, his praises sing:
pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
every voice in concert ring,
evermore and evermore!*

*Christ, to you, with God the Father,
and the Spirit there shall be,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
and the shout of jubilee,
honor, glory, and dominion,
and eternal victory,
evermore and evermore!*

The Third Lesson
Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Carol
Prepare the Way, O Zion

*Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.*

*He brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding.
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.*

*Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing.
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.*

The Fourth Lesson
Luke 1:26-35,38

Hymn
What Child is This

**What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;**

**Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

The Fifth Lesson

Luke 2:1-7

Hymn

UMH 230 | O Little Town of Bethlehem

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary; and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.**

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!**

Carol

Before the Marvel of This Night

*Before the marvel of this night,
adoring, fold your wings and bow;
then tear the sky apart with light
and with your news the world endow.
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace,
that fear and death and sorrow cease:
sing peace; sing peace; sing gift of peace;
sing peace; sing gift of peace!*

*Awake the sleeping world with song:
this is the day the Lord has made.
Assemble here, celestial throng,
in royal splendor come arrayed.
Give earth a glimpse of heavenly bliss,
a teasing taste of what they miss:
sing bliss; sing bliss; sing endless bliss;
sing bliss; sing endless bliss!*

*The love that we have always known,
our constant joy and endless light,
now to the loveless world be shown,
now break upon its deathly night.
Into one song compress the love
that rules our universe above:
sing love; sing love; sing God is love;
sing love; sing God is love!*

The Sixth Lesson

Luke 2:8-16

Carol

In the Bleak Midwinter

*In the bleak midwinter
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone:
snow had fallen,
snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter,
long ago.*

*Our God, heaven cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.*

*Enough for him whom cherubim
worship night and day,
a breastful of milk
and a mangerful of hay:
enough for him
whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel
which adore.*

*What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb,
if I were a wise man
I would do my part,
yet what I can I give him,
give my heart.*

* Hymn

The First Noel

**The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!**

Choir only

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!

**Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord
That hath made heav'n and earth of nought,
And with His blood our life hath bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!**

The Seventh Lesson

John 1:1-14

John Unfolds the Mystery of the Incarnation

*Hymn

UMH 234 v. 1, 3, & 6 | O Come All Ye Faithful

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him born the King of angels:
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, glory in the highest:
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

Response to God's Word

*Affirmation of Faith
The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

* universal

Sending Forth

*Hymn of Dedication
UMH No. 240 | Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

*Benediction

Postlude
Christmas Carillon

We Welcome You

As a United Methodist Church, we are proud to be a congregation with open hearts, open minds, and open doors. We strive to be a congregation that embodies God's absolute love and hospitality, proclaiming Jesus as our savior and as our model of the ultimate embodiment of God's love. We believe that all persons are of sacred worth and dignity as part of God's good creation. Saint Mark United Methodist Church welcomes all persons into the full life and ministry of our congregation, regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, family, or socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, or faith history.

Worship Team

Preaching: Rev. Dr. Carolyn Stephens, *Senior Pastor*

Liturgists: Madi Dunn, *Children's Minister*

Meagan Williams, *Assistant to the Pastor of Youth and Young Adults*

Lessons Readers: Pam Buzbee, Rick Gore, Mary Murray, Rev. Dr. Carol Rawlinson, Dr. Mike Smith, Dr. Sharon Smith, and Cecilia VanderLinde

Advent Wreath: The McArthur Family

Music: Justin Bowen, *Interim Director of Fine Arts and Organist*

Audio Visual: Johnny Sims, *Coordinator of Online Ministry*, Jay Drew, Deana Hilton, Anna Rader, Eric Steverson, and Julie Tootle

Usher Team: Buddy Wofford, *Head Usher*, Joel Black, Bob Brown, and Deana Hilton

Greeter Team: Pam Davis, *Head Greeter* and Luke Murphy



Attendance

Please sign the attendance pad located at the end of your row or scan this QR code to register your attendance and share prayer requests using our online Connection Card.

Tithes & Offerings

Please place your offering in the plate during this morning's service, or use the Secure Giving App, or Saint Mark's assigned number for text donations is 844-703-1444 and the keyword is 'operating'. To give via text, text the word 'operating', a space, and the amount you would like to give. For example, to give \$25, text 844-703-1444 operating 25. Your generosity allows us to love, accept and serve the people of our community.

The flowers on the Altar are giving to the Glory of God and in memory of Marcus Johnson Brown (December 19, 1904 – October 30, 1982) by the Brown Memorial Fund.

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We Invite You to Stay Connected with Saint Mark

Visit www.stmarkumc.org and subscribe to the newsletter on the homepage. We send our Remarks newsletter every Wednesday, a message from our Senior Pastor every Friday, and a Sunday Morning at Saint Mark email.

Supper Club Volunteers

Every Tuesday afternoon, Supper Club prepares and serves a hot meal to 60 people who are in need. Similar to Breakfast Club, this ministry provides a meal to individuals in a loving and respectful environment.

In 2024, similar to Breakfast Club, we are looking for people to volunteer on a rotational basis a few times a month. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Viveca Richards at 864-884-1206 or via email at viveca1956@gmail.com.

Christmas Eve Services | Sunday, December 24, 2023

11 AM - Sunday Morning Service with Communion
5 PM - Family Friendly Service
7 PM - Lessons and Congregational Caroling
11 PM - Service of Holy Communion

Church Offices Closed

Monday, December 25, 2023 - Monday, January 1, 2024

New Year's Eve Service | Sunday, December 31, 2023

10 AM - One Service Only



ST MARK YOUNG ADULT

CHRISTMAS PARTY

7pm

WEDNESDAY 12/20

@ AARON AND ANNA'S
199 14TH ST NE
APT 2003

PARKING IS TRICKY SO
TRY TO CARPOOL
FROM ST MARK IF
POSSIBLE :)

WHAT TO BRING:
A SHAREABLE SNACK
OR DRINK
A \$10 MAX GOOFY
GIFT